

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Withdrawn): A process for purifying difructose dianhydride III (hereinafter referred to as DFA III), which comprises adding powdered active carbon to a DFA III containing purified solution, containing DFA III of the purity 90% or more, at a concentration of R-Bx 10-60, at a rate of 0.1-5% to the solid content, and after defecation, separating the liquid part from the solid part, concentrating the liquid part, followed by immediate crystallization.

Claims 2-3 (Canceled)

Claim 4 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the average particle size of the powdered active carbon is 15-50 microns and the maximum particle size 200 microns or less.

Claim 5 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the solid-liquid separation is carried out by at least one operation selected from filtration with a filter aid, the use of a membrane filter, and the use of an ultrafilter membrane.

Claim 6 (Withdrawn): A process for purifying DFA III, which comprises chromatographing at least one of intermediates produced in the total steps for purification from a DFA III containing solution to product crystals of DFA III, and adding the resulting DFA III fraction in at least one step for purification.

Claims 7-12 (Canceled)

Claim 13 (Withdrawn): A process for purifying DFA III, which comprises separating a syrup from crystals by crystallization in total purification steps from a DFA III containing solution to product crystals of DFA III, and after further centrifugation to eliminate fine crystals, adding the syrup to at least one step for purification.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn): A process for purifying DFA III, which comprises adding powdered active carbon to a DFA III crude solution for purification at a rate of 0.1-5% to the solid content, the DFA III containing crude solution containing DFA III of the purity 60% or more, at a concentration of R-Bx 10 or more, and after defecation, separating the liquid part from the solid part, concentrating the liquid part, followed by immediate crystallization.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 14, wherein the DFA III containing crude solution is at least one of a DFA III containing solution, a DFA III fraction obtained by chromatography, a crystal or crude crystal syrup.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 14, wherein the average particle size of the powdered active carbon is 15-50 microns and the maximum particle size 200 microns or less.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 14, wherein the solid-liquid separation is carried out by at least one operation selected from filtration with a filter aid, the use of a membrane filter, and the use of an ultrafilter membrane.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in claim 15, wherein the DFA III containing solution is an enzyme reaction solution produced by action of fructosyltransferase on inulin.

Claim 19 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein inulin of which the polymerization degree of fructose is 10 or more, is used.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein inulin of which the polymerization degree of fructose is 10-60, is used.

Claim 21 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein an inulin fructotransferase (depolymerizing) is used as a fructosyltransferase.

Claim 22 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 21, wherein as an inulin fructotransferase (depolymerizing), at least one of a purified enzyme, crude enzyme, enzyme-containing material, the cells, the culture, and its processed material derived from Arthrobacter sp. AHU 1753 strain (FERM BP-8296), is used.

Claim 23 (Withdrawn): Crystals, crushed crystals or granular crystals of DFA III of which the purity is 95w/w% or more, prepared according to the process as claimed in Claim 1.

Claim 24 (Withdrawn): A process for producing a DFA III containing solution, which comprises making a fructosyltransferase act on inulin of which the polymerization degree of fructose is 10-60.

Claim 25 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 24, wherein the fructosyltransferase is an inulin fructotransferase (depolymerizing) derived from Arthrobacter sp. AHU 1753 strain (FERM BP-8296).

Claim 26 (Withdrawn): The process as claimed in Claim 24, wherein inulin of which the polymerization degree of fructose is 10-60 and the polysaccharide content is 80-100%, is used.

Claims 27-28 (Cancelled).

Claim 29 (Withdrawn): A process for producing highly pure crystals of DFA III, which comprises producing a DFA III containing solution in a process as claimed in Claim 24, chromatographing the solution, and immediately concentrating and crystallizing the resulting DFA III rich fraction.

Claims 30-42 (Cancelled)

Claim 43 (New): A process for purifying difructose dianhydride III (“DFA III”) having a purity of at least 70 w/w% based on dry weight, comprising:  
contacting the DFA III containing solution containing DFA III at a purity of less than 70%, a R-Bx of 10 or more, and a DFA III purity of at least 60 w/w%, with active carbon particles, wherein said active carbon particles are added in amount of 5% or less based on the solid content of the DFA III containing solution and the average particle size of the activated carbon particles ranges from 15 to 200 microns;

separating the solid and liquid phases of the resulting solution, and  
recovering DFA III having a purity of at 70 w/w% or more based on dry weight.

Claim 44 (New): The process of claim 43, further comprising contacting under aeration the DFA III containing solution with a yeast that acts on disaccharides or monosaccharides other than DFA III to degrade or incorporate them into the yeast.

Claim 45 (New): The process of claim 43, further comprising separating DFA III chromatographically from the recovered DFA III having a purity of 70 w/w% or more.

Claim 46 (New): The process of claim 43, further comprising:  
contacting under aeration the DFA III containing solution with a yeast that acts on disaccharides or monosaccharides other than DFA III to degrade or incorporate them into the yeast; and

separating DFA III chromatographically from the DFA III containing solution or from the recovered DFA III having a purity of 70 w/w% or more.

Claim 47 (New): The process of claim 43, wherein said solid and liquid phases are separated by filtration.

Claim 48 (New): The process of claim 43, further comprising crystallizing DFA III having a purity of at least 95% from the recovered DFA III, wherein said crystallized DFA III lacks the smell of DFA III crystals produced by a method not employing the active carbon particles.

Claim 49 (New): The process of claim 43, further comprising crystallizing DFA III having a purity of at least 99% from the recovered DFA III, wherein said crystallized DFA III lacks the smell of DFA III crystals produced by a method not employing the active carbon particles.

Claim 50 (New): The process of claim 43, wherein said DFA III containing solution is obtained by treating inulin with fructosyltransferase, wherein the polymerization degree of fructose is 10 or more.

Claim 51 (New): The process of claim 43, wherein said DFA III containing solution is obtained by treating inulin with inulin fructotransferase, wherein the polymerization degree of fructose is 10 or more.

Claim 52 (New): The process of claim 43, wherein said DFA III containing solution is a solution produced by action of a fructosyltransferase on a fructose polymer or a material containing fructose polymer.

Claim 53 (New): The process of claim 43, wherein said DFA III containing solution is a syrup suitable for crystallization and separation.